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noble inheritance. The very thought of it stirs one's blood. The intellectual wealth of the ages is ours. Let us fill ourselves with truth; and partake very sparingly of the merely destructive critic. He is often an insufferable offence. A child or an idiot can destroy; but children and idiots ought not to be turned loose in halls of statuary and galleries of paintings. They could destroy in an hour more than Raphael and Angelo could create in a life time. Most of all, we must cultivate a homiletic and devout spirit.

This is scientific. To enjoy the glorious hills, we must have mountains in the brain; to appreciate the sea, we must have oceans in the soul. Nature gives up her secrets only to her devout students. To understand philosophy and art we must be artistic and philosophical. To know God we must be God-like; to see him we must be pure in heart. To understand his word our ear must be trained to catch the music of his voice, our heart must feel the inspiration of his love. There is a knowledge which dictionaries and grammars can never give; he who has only this knowledge sits in the vestibule and is a stranger to the glorious temple. To sit at Christ's feet is the best university. The possession of divine love is absolutely essential to the understanding of the revelation of divine love. Love only can interpret love. The "undevout student" of the Sacred Word "is mad." He lacks the key to unlock the glorious arcana of God. "The people that do know their God shall be strong and do exploits."

HERMENEUTICS AND THE HIGHER CRITICISM.

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The conclusions of the Higher Criticism are mainly drawn from other considerations than the meaning of the several books of Scripture as determined by valid exegesis. We may have the clearest possible apprehension of a writer's words and of the scope of his entire work, and yet be in doubt as to the time and place of his writing, and be utterly ignorant of his name. The questions of the integrity of a given book, of its credibility, and its literary style, are to be discussed upon grounds outside the sphere of Hermeneutics. We carry our appeal to the intuitions of the mind, to a sense of the fitness of things, the probabilities or improbabilities of a given hypothesis. The date and authorship of the Book of Job, for example, are not likely to be decided by any exposition of its contents. The most lucid analysis of its argument and the most satisfactory and convinc-

ing interpretation, may yet leave the question of its origin an open one. And indeed we may well grant that more than one hypothesis is possible. The quite prevalent opinion, that this poem, so highly artistic in its structure, and having so many affinities with the *Hochmah* literature of the Solomonic and post-Solomonic period, belongs essentially to that classic age of the Hebrew nation, must have great weight with every thoughtful critic. And yet it may be forcibly urged that the reasons alleged for this hypothesis are not altogether convincing. The absence of allusion to the customs of Israel, and the simple and faithful portraiture of patriarchal times, are with many an argument equally strong for showing that the work is non-Israelitish and pre-Mosaic. Certainly, many of the arguments put forth against the high antiquity of the Book of Job would prove equally conclusive against the great age of the Egyptian pyramids and of the poems of Homer. Criticism may, indeed, with much assurance set aside the old notion of the Mosaic authorship of Job, but its reasoning against that particular theory would be without force against the hypothesis of an unknown author contemporary with Moses, or living before his time.

But these questions of Criticism become dependent upon Hermeneutics when, as with a number of critics, an allegorical interpretation of the poem forms the main ground of their judgment. If Job is regarded as a personification of Israel in the midst of the sorrows of exile, then it logically follows that the book belongs to the period of the Babylonian captivity. So, too, those interpreters who maintain that the suffering servant of God, in Isaiah LII., 13—LIII., 12, is the Jewish people in the miseries of exile, naturally assign the composition of Isaiah XL.—LXVI. to that same memorable period of national humiliation and distress. It is apparent, therefore, that in some important questions of the Higher Criticism, a valid interpretation of the language of a writer will either virtually determine the matter in dispute, or open a new issue. Can a well-balanced judgment affirm that the language and structure of the "Later Isaiah" are fairly satisfied with the allegorical interpretation? Is that wise servant, who was led like a lamb to slaughter, and whose wounds served to atone for the transgressions of others, a truthful portraiture of a sinful nation punished with exile because of its rebellion against the Holy One? If so, the conclusions based upon that exegesis may be legitimate, and it is seen at once that the results of the critical procedure are due to the method and principles of interpretation adopted.

The relation of Hermeneutics and the Higher Criticism may also be seen in the discussion of particular words and phrases. The use of the phrase "beyond the Jordan" in Deut. I., 1, 5, has been very nat-

usually cited as serving to indicate the place and time of the composition of Deuteronomy. The translation which reads "on this side Jordan" is now rejected as an error, but the assertion is often made that these words had acquired long before Moses's day a technical meaning, like the geographical term Perea, and can therefore determine nothing as to the position of the writer when he composed his work. The use of the words by Moses, however, as written in Deut. III., 20, 25, hardly comports with this position. Why, on this theory, should Moses employ a technical term in one sense when writing, and in another when addressing the people? Here principles of interpretation are involved, and the candid student, who has no theory to support, no bias one way or another, and who calmly weighs all considerations bearing on the subject in hand, will abstain from all dogmatizing utterances. His search is solely for truth, and truth can never be helped by adherence to a hypothesis, however venerable, which stands in conflict with the legitimate conclusions of sober exegesis.

Impartial criticism may, on the one hand, base itself upon an interpretation of Deuteronomy which reads in such phrases as the one just noticed evidences of post-Mosaic composition; in that case it finds itself opposed to certain ancient and widely-cherished beliefs. It may, on the other hand, with great force allege that a legitimate interpretation of the discourses therein attributed to Moses favors the opinion that in the main they are an accurate and truthful setting forth of the latest legislation of that great hero of the Exodus. No one would now maintain that Moses wrote the account of his own death and burial, as recorded in the last chapter; why might not the author of that chapter have been also the compiler of the whole book? And why, we may add, may he not have been a contemporary of Joshua and Eleazar, who like Luke, thought it good, having had perfect understanding of all things, to write them down in an orderly form (Luke I., 3)? But as soon as one assumes such an hypothesis, he is assailed by critics who allege that the passage concerning a king (Deut. XVII., 14-20) contains so accurate a portraiture of Solomon as to beget the conviction that it is of post-Solomonic origin. Here, however, it should be observed that this new issue opens into questions not to be settled by an interpretation of the text. There can be no dispute about the meaning of the language employed in Deut. XVII., 14-20. It plainly represents Moses as telling the people, prophetically, that when they shall have become settled in the land of promise, they will choose a king; and, in that event, he gives commandments touching his election and behavior. But whether Moses gave any such commandments at all, must be decided by considera-

tions outside the province of interpretation. Our conclusion on this point will not be likely to rest upon any question as to the proper meaning of the language here attributed to Moses.

Criticism may, however, sometimes be influenced by the supposed import of words, which, upon rigid scrutiny, will be found to furnish no convincing evidence in the case. How often have the words of Ezekiel (xiv., 14) been quoted to prove the historical character of the person of Job? It is incredible, say some, that a fictitious character should be thus mentioned in connection with Noah and Daniel. Here the appeal is taken to our sense of the fitness of things, and it should be conceded that there is force in the plea: Moses and Samuel are mentioned in a similar way by Jeremiah (xv., 1), and in the absence of other considerations, there is no good reason for even raising the question of their being real characters. Of Job, however, we have no other trace or knowledge than in the book which bears his name, and if, from a thorough study of the book, one reaches the conclusion that it is not a history of fact, but a dramatic production, that loses none of its beauty or usefulness by being regarded as essentially a parable, we see nothing in Ezekiel's language that compels him to set aside such conclusion. The leading character of a fiction may become so widely known and so familiar to thought as to figure as real in the language of common life. The righteousness and the patience of such a character would become proverbial, and a writer of the present day might, like Ezekiel, cite the familiar example along with real characters, without ever entertaining the question of the historical existence of the person named.

It is an accepted principle of Hermeneutics that an interpreter should identify himself with the spirit of the writer whom he would expound. Would he interpret Isaiah? He must transport himself to Isaiah's age, and become possessed with some measure of the emotion of the prophet when he surveyed the idolatrous abominations of his nation. He must also study his style of address, and seek to grasp the real purport of his imagery, so as not to read in them ideas foreign to the prophet's mind. When, for example, he portrays the sinful nation as diseased in head and in heart, and declares that "from the sole of the foot even unto the head—no soundness in it—wounds, bruises and raw sores" (Isa. i., 6), what exegete will insist upon the extreme literal import of his words? May we not allow that some of these doleful prophetic descriptions contain elements of Oriental hyperbole, and perhaps, at times, are colored by the prophet's own despondency? The language of Elijah, in 1 Kgs. xix., 10, is manifestly of this character, and very possibly other prophets might have

expressed their heart-sorrow in similar terms, though not flying for their lives. When, therefore we find Isaiah denouncing the burnt-offerings, and the blood of bullocks and of lambs, as an abomination to Jehovah (Isa. I., 11-14), and Amos uttering like words, together with an obscure allusion to Israel's failure to offer sacrifice to Jehovah in the wilderness as contrasted with their idolatrous tendencies (Amos v., 25, 26), is it ingenuous to urge such passages as affording any valid evidence of the opinion of these prophets as to the divine origin of sacrifice or ceremonial? When Jeremiah declares that in the day of the exodus from Egypt, Jehovah gave the fathers no commandment concerning matters of burnt-offering and sacrifice, but rather enjoined obedience (Jer. VII., 22, 23), must we understand his words as a rigid statement of historical fact, which can have no other than a strict literal interpretation? Would not such a position oblige us logically to insist that, according to verse 25 of the same chapter, prophets had been sent unto Israel from the time of the Exodus *early every day* continuously? Here certainly is a question of exegesis, and he will prove the best interpreter who keeps himself freest from the polemical spirit. It scarcely satisfies the purport of Jeremiah's words to say that on the particular *day* of Israel's exodus, no specific commandment was issued touching sacrifice. Nor does the language accord with the view of those who would merely understand that the Decalogue contains no precept touching burnt-offering and sacrifice. Nor does it seem natural to explain the words as applying only to voluntary offerings, or so to paraphrase them as to make Jehovah say, "I did not at the exodus institute or command sacrifices *for their own sake*."

On the other hand, to affirm, as some do, that Isaiah and Amos, and Hosea (VI., 6), and Micah (VI., 8), and Jeremiah teach the utter worthlessness of sacrifices, and their lack of any sanction from Jehovah, is hazarding a proposition exceedingly difficult to reconcile with the whole drift of Old Testament history. Far more reasonable, many will believe, is the interpretation which finds in such a passage as Jer. VII., 21-26, not a sober historical statement to be literally taken, but an impassioned outburst of prophecy peculiar to Jeremiah, in which the utter worthlessness of sacrifice *as opposed to obedience* is made conspicuous. For this same prophet's language in ch. XVII., 26, and XXXIII., 17-22, is, to say the least, difficult to reconcile with the supposition that he regarded sacrifices as without the sanction of Jehovah, or not of divine origin.

And so again and again, in the literature of the Higher Criticism, we come upon questions which depend for solution upon the correct interpretation of a Scripture text. Many of these questions are

of too grave a character to be determined by a merely possible exposition; and, as in the discussion of biblical doctrines, no place or favor should be given to an imperious dogmatism. Nothing should be taken for granted, but every relevant consideration should be calmly weighed. Writers who indulge in frequent declarations of what a passage *must* mean, or of what it *cannot possibly* signify, and are wont to treat learned critics' views with contempt, are not the ones who command the confidence of the true scholar, however much he may admire their learning and ability. Hengstenberg and Ewald (*nomina venerabilia!*) represent two opposite extremes. Their invaluable contributions to biblical literature are everywhere acknowledged. But their opinions will probably have little weight with future generations of students just in proportion to the conspicuous dogmatism with which they were put forth. We can afford to wait a long time for the solution of some important questions of Criticism, but we cannot afford to rest complacently on any conclusion which has been reached through a dogmatic interpretation. Let us have, as far as possible, the exact truth, "though the heavens fall," for in that case the falling heavens will do us no harm.

THE USE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT IN THE SUNDAY SCHOOL,—A SYMPOSIUM.

WHY THE OLD TESTAMENT SHOULD ALWAYS HAVE A PROMI- NENT PLACE IN SUNDAY SCHOOL INSTRUCTION.

1. We shall find nothing that can take the place of the biographies of the Old Testament as a means of conveying religious truth attractively and impressively.
2. We shall find nowhere else the best instruction for nations, for social and political organisms. The New Testament addresses the individual, and reaches society as a whole only in that way. It discloses immortality and the kingdom of heaven. The Old Testament is full of instruction and of warning for the kingdoms of this world, whose life it would regulate and whose destiny it would shape as ending here.
3. The Psalter is behind us only in time; in spirit, as in expression, it must ever be the Psalm-book of the Church on earth.
4. Our grandest Christian enterprises still run largely in prophetic grooves. The patron saint of missions after all, is not St. John